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ABSTRACT

This book shows how and why the computer is so well suited to producing discovery learning environments. An examination of the literature outlines four basic modes of instruction: didactic, Socratic, inquiry, and discovery. Research from the fields of education, psychology, and physiology is presented to demonstrate the many strengths of discovery-based learning. Chapter 1 presents evidence that more discovery, and less didactic, methodology needs to be used in the schools. Chapter 2 shows why the computer is especially good for using discovery method and why the scenario experience often demands computer use. Scenario educational software planning is outlined in chapter 3, then chapters 4 through 8 delve into the important design features of scenario software: realism, interactivity, consequences and feedback, challenge, and duration. Ways of testing the effects of scenario software are suggested in chapter 9, and chapter 10 makes generalizations about what works about scenario software and applies it to improve education. Chapter 11 describes a computer software called SESAME (Scenario Educational Software Author's Menu-driven Editor) that educators can use to create their own educational software and improve their courses. Appendices offer methods for scenario software field tests and suggested answers to chapter questions. (MAS)

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